

>>>>>> Matthew – Lesson 43 <<<<<<<

1) Continuing in chapter 21 ...

Matthew 21:28–32(ESV)

The Parable of the Two Sons

²⁸ “What do you think? A man had two sons. And he went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work in the vineyard today.’ ²⁹ And he answered, ‘I will not,’ but afterward he changed his mind and went. ³⁰ And he went to the other son and said the same. And he answered, ‘I will, sir,’ but did not go. ³¹ Which of the two did the will of his father?” They said, “The first.” Jesus said to them, “Truly, I say to you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes go into the kingdom of God before you. ³² For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him. And even when you saw it, you did not afterward change your minds and believe him.

- 2) This is one of those passages that is really very straight forward.
- 3) We have that contrast that Jesus gives between the son who says yes and does not go to the vineyard and the one who says no then repents and goes after all.
- 4) The obvious lesson for us is to submit to our God.
 - a) If God or God’s word puts on our heart something to do then we must do it.
 - b) Even if our first inclination is to say no, we know that we must obey our God in the end, in other words, repent and do.
- 5) From their response, the meaning of the parable was obvious to the chief priests and elders as well.
- 6) However, what was not obvious to them was that they were the example of the son who said yes and then did not go.
- 7) What is even sadder is that as they listened to John, they at first did not see but possibly, afterward did and when they saw others believing they still would not turn from the path they were on.
 - a) We must remember here that the Pharisees were really in many cases just average folks.
 - b) So, when they saw “it” – here the “it” they saw was the turning of the tax collectors and prostitutes, they still did not believe John’s message.
- 8) Let’s brainstorm for a minute about this:

What are some things you can think of that stopped them from believing John’s message and caused them not repent and accept Jesus?

- a) My guess would be one primarily of jealousy.
- b) A close second would be fear – fear of the people and of what Rome would do.
 - i) The fear of the people because they would lose their status and positions.
 - ii) There is always this idea in their minds that if they accept Jesus as the true Messiah, and he did turn out to be a revolutionary king who set out to rid them of Roman rule, it will not go well for them or the nation.

iii) One of the ironic facts that go along with this is that in the next passage, Jesus tells them that a greater kingdom is being taken away from them because of their disbelief.

43 Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people producing its fruits.

1) Jesus immediately strikes forth on another parable ...

Matthew 21:33–46(ESV)

The Parable of the Tenants

33 “Hear another parable. There was a master of a house who planted a vineyard and put a fence around it and dug a winepress in it and built a tower and leased it to tenants, and went into another country. **34** When the season for fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the tenants to get his fruit. **35** And the tenants took his servants and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. **36** Again he sent other servants, more than the first. And they did the same to them. **37** Finally he sent his son to them, saying, ‘They will respect my son.’ **38** But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, ‘This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and have his inheritance.’ **39** And they took him and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. **40** When therefore the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?” **41** They said to him, “He will put those wretches to a miserable death and let out the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the fruits in their seasons.”

42 Jesus said to them, **“Have you never read in the Scriptures:**

**‘The stone that the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone;
this was the Lord’s doing,
and it is marvelous in our eyes’?**

43 Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people producing its fruits. **44** And the one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and when it falls on anyone, it will crush him.”

45 When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they perceived that he was speaking about them. **46** And although they were seeking to arrest him, they feared the crowds, because they held him to be a prophet.

2) Jesus did not give them much time to think about this – he jumps right in and says: **“Hear another parable ...”**

3) Now, we are going to the next level.

4) Jesus tells the parable and then asks the question:

When therefore the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?

5) It amazes me that they answer the question considering where Jesus is obviously going.

a) One thing we might consider here is Jesus’ ability to teach.

- b) He can grab the attention of an audience like no one else could and in doing so, they may have been almost spellbound by the story.
- 6) However, they just answer the question as though this was a normal discourse.
- 7) Then, Jesus hits them again with the closing statements.
- 8) It amazes me again that Matthew says that they “perceived” that Jesus was talking about them.
 - a) How much clearer could one be than Jesus in what he was saying?
 - b) They had to see the prophets as the first servants and, they knew full well that they were planning to kill Jesus if they could.
 - c) The part they still don’t see is that Jesus is the Son of God who is the sender of the prophets and Him.
- 9) It’s like they were oblivious to what was being said up until the very last moment.

So, what about us, are we ever oblivious to what God is saying?

To ask it perhaps a different way, do we ever read scripture and say to ourselves this can’t be talking to me?

10) Jesus continues to poke the bear, so to speak...

Matthew 22:1–14(ESV)

The Parable of the Wedding Feast

22 And again Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying, ²“The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son, ³and sent his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding feast, but they would not come. ⁴Again he sent other servants, saying, ‘Tell those who are invited, “See, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding feast.”’ ⁵ But they paid no attention and went off, one to his farm, another to his business, ⁶ while the rest seized his servants, treated them shamefully, and killed them. ⁷ The king was angry, and he sent his troops and destroyed those murderers and burned their city. ⁸ Then he said to his servants, ‘The wedding feast is ready, but those invited were not worthy. ⁹ Go therefore to the main roads and invite to the wedding feast as many as you find.’ ¹⁰ And those servants went out into the roads and gathered all whom they found, both bad and good. So the wedding hall was filled with guests.

¹¹ “But when the king came in to look at the guests, he saw there a man who had no wedding garment. ¹² And he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding garment?’ And he was speechless. ¹³ Then the king said to the attendants, ‘Bind him hand and foot and cast him into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ ¹⁴ For many are called, but few are chosen.”

11) To really understand this parable, we must understand the background and culture of the time.

12) In this culture, two invitations were expected when banquets were given.

- a) The first asked the guests to attend (RSVP); the second announced that all was ready.

- b) When the king sent his slaves to call those who had been invited, this referred to the second invitation.
 - c) These invitees had already accepted the first invitation.
 - d) At this second one, however, these guests said they would not come.
 - e) Not only that, but they refused yet a third invitation, as described in 22:4–6. The second is being described in verse 3.
 - f) To make matters worse in this case, these were royal invitations – issued by the king.
- 13) Finally, we have to consider the fact that some not only refused the invitation they killed the servants who brought the second invitation.
- 14) The king summarily takes vengeance on the ones who did this heinous thing.
- 15) He then sends his servants out again to invite others to the feast – basically anyone who will come.
- a) In doing this he makes the statement that they are to invite; “**to the wedding feast as many as you find.**”
 - b) They did as the king commanded and in doing so, they brought in both the good and the bad.
- 16) All that being said, we are at a point that the Pharisees, scribes, and chief priests, if they are all still in the audience should have been offended and surprised.
- 17) Offended since Jesus is obviously talking about them and their ancestors being the rejectors and killers of the servants (prophets).
- a) They would also have been surprised that the king now throws the feast open to everyone.
- 18) Vs. 10 marks a transition of sorts and an explanation of those who came.
- ¹⁰ And those servants went out into the roads and gathered all whom they found, both bad and good. So the wedding hall was filled with guests.**
- 19) The late arrival of the king was customary, for often the host did not partake of the banquet but came after the meal had begun.
- 20) The wedding clothes probably refers to clean, fresh clothing.
- a) It was unthinkable to come to a wedding banquet in soiled clothes.
 - b) This would insult the host, who could only assume that the guest was ignorant, had not truly been invited, or was not prepared for the banquet.
 - c) When the king pointed this out, the man was speechless. He had no explanation for his appearance (he had plenty of time to get ready), so the king declared him unprepared and unworthy.
 - d) The man had been invited, but he needed his wedding garment or he would miss out on the banquet.

Assuming that we were among the guests that finally enter the banquet hall;

What makes our “wedding cloths?”

- a) There is an open invitation, but we must be ready.

- b) The way we get ready is for us to accept Christ as our savior and stand in the righteousness of God provided through our faith.
- c) Without that we are just an uninvited guest and will be cast out into the outer darkness.